

Alcohol

Can I drink alcohol if I have diabetes?

Many people with diabetes can have a moderate amount of alcohol if they want. Still there are some people who should avoid alcohol. If you have questions about whether alcohol is safe for you, talk to your doctor.

A moderate amount of alcohol is no more than:

- 1 drink for women per day
- 2 drinks for men per day

One drink is equal to:

- 1 ½ ounces of liquor
- 12 ounces of beer
- 5 ounces of wine

Keep safe if you drink alcohol

Drinking alcohol can lower your blood glucose for up to 24 hours. To stay safe, follow these tips:

- Always eat if you drink alcohol.
- Check your blood glucose more often the day you drink and the next day to see how alcohol affects you.
- Tell people with you that you have diabetes and teach them about signs of low blood glucose.
- Check the size of your glasses. Most wine glasses hold much more than 5 ounces of wine. Large beer glasses are more than 12 ounces.

Who should not drink at all?

- Those with alcohol problems, pregnant women or those under the age of 21
- If your doctor has told you not to
- If your diabetes is not in good control, wait to drink until it is in better control
- If you have complications such as severe neuropathy
- If you take medicines that say avoid alcohol on the bottle
- If you have questions about whether alcohol is safe for you, talk to your doctor

Choose lower calorie options

- Light beer instead of regular
- Dry red or white wine
- Drinks made with sugar free mixers like diet soda, light cranberry juice, or diet tonic water
- Skinny mixers like lower calorie/sugar margaritas

Avoid high calorie drinks

- Liqueurs – like Irish Crème
- High calorie mixed drinks like margaritas, Pina coladas, mudslides
- Drinks mixed with cream
- Full sugar soda and other sugary mixes